

REMARKS

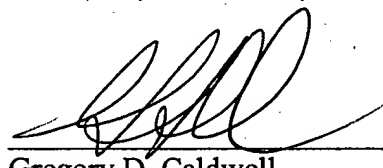
By this preliminary amendment, claims 1-27, 29-34, 36-38, and 40-42 have been amended. No claims have been added or cancelled. Therefore, claims 1-44 are pending. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone if such contact would further the examination of the present application.

Please charge any shortages and credit any overcharges to our Deposit Account number 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,
BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN, LLP

Date:

1/21/04



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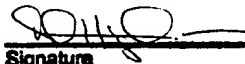
I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail with sufficient postage in an envelope addressed to Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313 on:

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